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LETTER DATED 18 SEPTEMBER 1995 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to communicate to you, and through you to the members of the Security Council, certain observations following an in-depth review of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina which I conducted on 16 September 1995 with my senior advisers, including the United Nations Co-Chairman of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, my Special Representative for the Former Yugoslavia and the Deputy Force Commander of the United Nations Peace Forces there.

I warmly welcome the current initiative undertaken by the Government of the United States of America. The agreement concluded on 8 September 1995 between the Governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) on basic principles for a settlement of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Framework for a Cessation of Hostilities within the Sarajevo Temporary Exclusion Zone signed by the Bosnian Serb party in Belgrade on 14 September 1995 are important and positive developments.

After more than three years' experience of international efforts to control and resolve this conflict, it would be wrong to underestimate the difficulties that lie ahead in negotiating the further arrangements envisaged in those two agreements. In particular, all sides will have to exercise greater military restraint than is the case at present. But I believe that today there may be credible prospects for a viable and lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina if all parties are at last ready to forego the military option.

In these circumstances, I have reexamined the different ways in which the international community can support implementation of the peace agreement when it has been concluded. The members of the Security Council will recall that I have previously addressed this question in the non-paper which I made available to them on 30 September and 1 October 1993 and in my letter of 24 July 1994 to the then President.

In those earlier communications I expressed the view that the most viable option for international support to implementation of a peace agreement would be



for the Security Council to authorize interested Member States, assisted as appropriate by regional organizations or arrangements, to undertake both the military and the civilian aspects of this task. This conclusion was based on a number of factors: the scale of the operation envisaged; the Organization's recent difficulties in obtaining military, police and civilian personnel for peace-keeping operations; its limited capacity to manage large-scale operations, especially those established under Chapter VII of the Charter with a potential enforcement role; the failure of Member States to pay on time their assessed contributions for peace-keeping; and the difficulties of coordinating the operations of military personnel and civilian personnel with different mandates and different chains of command.

A thorough review of recent developments has led me to conclude that all the above considerations are at least as relevant today as they were at the time of my earlier communications to the Council. In particular, the aggravation of the Organization's financial crisis makes it even more unrealistic to envisage UNPROFOR being enlarged to perform the task that will be required.

Members of the Security Council will also recall that in paragraph 76 of my report of 30 May 1995 (S/1995/444) I expressed the view that if the Security Council decided that it was necessary to make greater use of force to achieve its objectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina it would be necessary to replace UNPROFOR with a multinational force authorized by the Security Council to take such action. The essential rationale for this view was the impossibility of entrusting to a United Nations peace-keeping force a mandate which would require it to take enforcement action against parties whose cooperation it required if it was to be able to carry out its peace-keeping functions. I believe that these considerations remain valid and will need to be taken into account if the current peace initiative does not succeed and it is decided that further enforcement action is necessary to end the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is accordingly my intention, as soon as a peace agreement is concluded, to recommend to the Security Council that it authorize an ad hoc coalition of Member States, acting as appropriate with regional organizations or arrangements, to support all aspects of implementation of the agreement, with the exception of those relating to the relief and return of refugees and displaced persons which should continue to be entrusted to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Equally, if the current peace initiative does not succeed and more enforcement action is decided upon by the Security Council, I intend to recommend that UNPROFOR be replaced by a multinational force authorized by the Security Council to carry out such action and to assume responsibility for those aspects of UNPROFOR's existing mandate which will remain valid.

In either case urgent action would be required to prepare for an expeditious hand-over by UNPROFOR to the multinational force that would be established by the Member States so authorized by the Council. The Council would also, in these circumstances, wish to consider what arrangements would be appropriate to ensure that it was kept duly informed about the operations of the multinational force, including its civilian components.

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The meeting on 16 September also reviewed the United Nations current peace-keeping operations in Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, where I believe that the United Nations can continue to play a useful peace-keeping role. I shall submit recommendations in this regard to the Security Council before the expiry of UNCRO's and UNPREDEP's current mandates on 30 November 1995.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention to the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI
